



Paralegal 10 - Introduction To The Law and The Legal Profession

Fall 2013 - Hybrid Class: Tuesdays 6:45 – 8:15 (AT-A214) & Online

Instructors: Nikki Mehrpoo Jacobson, Professor of Law & Attorney at Law
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Section #: 8563

Office Hours: Tuesdays 5:00-5:30 p.m. in AT-A214
Wednesdays 5:30-6:30 p.m. in AT-A201
Also by Appointment

Etudes: www.myetudes.org

PARALEGAL: A paralegal is a person, qualified by education, training or work experience who is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, corporation, governmental agency or other entity and who performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible.

Paralegal Program Objectives

1. The Paralegal Studies Program is designed to prepare the student to assist the attorney in both private and public sectors in all phases of legal work and to equip the student with the knowledge necessary to enter the legal service fields as an entry-level paralegal.
2. To insure quality paralegal education at the community college level.
3. To familiarize students with the legal system and the role of the paralegal in the delivery of legal services in the public and private sectors.
4. To train students to be prepared to use and apply the most current paralegal skills.
5. To educate students to intelligently and ethically serve the legal community.
6. To train students in critical paralegal skills such as investigation, legal research, interviewing, written and oral communications.
7. To educate, train and provide students with the theoretical background to perform the paralegal's tasks in substantive areas of law and legal specialties.
8. To educate and train students in areas of procedural law emphasizing the paralegals role in litigation, mediation and arbitration.
9. To educate students about the general principles of ethical legal practice as defined by the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility, and California's Business & Professions Code §6450.
10. To encourage students to contribute to the advancement of the legal profession.
11. To provide counseling during the program and to assist students in preparing for and obtaining meaningful careers in the paralegal field.

Paralegals may not provide legal services directly to the public except as permitted by law.

Course Description

Paralegal/Law 10 is an introductory course in formalizing the career of the paralegal. It is an introduction to the law and ethics, social forces and the law, a comparison of the role of the lawyer and the paralegal, legal terminology, legal research and writing.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Supportive Services in *HRLC 119* or via telephone at (310) 287-4450 as soon as possible to better ensure such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Course Texts, References, Supplies, Requirements

Introduction to Law for Paralegals, A Critical Thinking Approach, by Currier and E. Eimmermann (5th EDITION)

All assignments must be typed, double spaced, 1 inch margin, and at least 12 pt. Font.

All assignments must indicate your name, description of assignment, class name, section number and date.

All emails to the instructor must indicate your name, clear question, class name, section number and date.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

This course will help students achieve the following institutional Student Learning Outcomes:

- A. **Critical Thinking:** Analyze problems by differentiating fact from opinions, using evidence, and using sound reasoning to specify multiple solutions and their consequences.
 - **Assessment:** The student will read court opinions and prepare legal briefs and memorandum.
- B. **Ethics:** Practice and demonstrate standards of personal and professional integrity, honesty and fairness; apply ethical principles in submission of all college work.
 - **Assessment:** The student will read articles and handouts about legal ethics and prepare outlines and summaries to gain knowledge of necessary legal ethics.
- C. **Communication:** Effectively communicate thought in a clear, well-organized manner to persuade, inform, and convey ideas in academic, work, family and community settings.
 - **Assessment:** The student will do a group class presentation on an assigned legal topic.
- D. **Civic Responsibility:** Apply the principles of civility to situations in the contexts of work, family, community and the global world.
 - **Assessment:** The student will attend a local court of law and *give a written account of what you learned from the experience.*

Briefing of Cases

I expect you to learn the art of 'case briefing'. The case briefing method will give you great assistance in learning the assigned material and it will prepare you for the class discussions as well. I will provide you with a handout describing how to brief cases. I will also spend time during the semester explaining how to brief cases.

Grading and Evaluation (1100 points)

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| Chapter Outlines | 250 points (5 outlines – Chapters 1-5 – 50 points each) |
| Case Briefings | 300 points (3 case briefings – 100 points, 100 points and 100 points) |
| Office Memorandums | 250 points (2 Assignments – 100 points, 150 points) |
| Exams | 200 points (2 Exams - 100 points each) |
| In Class Participation/Attendance | 50 points |
| Online Chat Room Participation | 50 points |

Attendance/Participation

- Your attendance will be recorded for each class. It is your responsibility to make sure that you sign the attendance roster each class session. The instructor has the discretion to drop any student who has more than 5 absences (excused or unexcused) in the semester. Attendance and Participation will be 10% of your overall grade.
- Attend every class and be prepared. If you are absent, you are responsible for the work which is due upon your return. Thus, obtain several students' telephone numbers and e-mail addresses in order to properly prepare for class prior to your return.
- **There are absolutely no make-ups for any missed assignments or classes unless previously agreed upon by the instructor. NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.**
- Please turn off all beepers, cell phones, etc.... No children are allowed in class.

Assignments

****Each Week Please Do The Assigned Reading, Review The Powerpoint On E-Tudes, Submit The Assignment On Etudes or in class as assigned. There May Be Additional Assigned Work.*

****Please Note: This Schedule Is Subject To Change In Class By The Instructor. Additional Handouts And Assignments Will Be Given Through Out The Semester. You Are Responsible For All Assignments Even If You Are Absent.*

****Please Note: No Hand Written Work Will Be Accepted. All Assignments Must Be Typed.*

Week 1 Introduction to the Paralegal Profession

Homework: Read Chapter 1
Chapter 1 Outline

Week 2 Introduction to the Study of Law

What is Legal Analysis?
Analyzing the Facts
Identifying the Appropriate Legal Rules
Applying the Legal Rules to Facts

Chapter 1

Homework: Read Chapter 2
Chapter 2 Outline

Week 3 Paralegal in the Legal System

The Definition of Paralegal
Paralegal Education
Paralegal Professional Associations
Registration, Certification and Licensure
What Paralegals Do
Where Paralegals Work

Chapter 2

Homework: **Study for Exam #1: Chapters 1 & 2**
Read Chapter 3
Chapter 3 Outline

Week 4 **Exam #1: Chapters 1 & 2**

Functions and Sources of Law

Defining Law
Functions of Law
Sources of Law

Chapter 3

Homework: Read Chapters 3 & 4
Chapter 4 Outline

Week 5 **Classification of the Law**

Federal versus State Law
Criminal Law versus Civil Law
Substantial versus Procedural Law

Chapter 4

Homework: Read Chapters 4 & 5
Chapter 5 Outline

Week 6 **Classification of the Law**

Federal versus State Law
Criminal Law versus Civil Law
Substantial versus Procedural Law

Chapter 4

Homework: Read Chapter 5
Chapter 5 Outline

Week 7 **Structure of the Court System**

Trial versus Appellate Courts
Federal and State Court Systems
Court Personnel

Chapter 5

Homework: **Study for Exam #2: Chapters 3, 4 & 5**
Read Chapter 11
Chapter 11 Outline

Week 8 **Exam #2: Chapters 3, 4 & 5**

Legal Ethics

Ethics Rules
The Big Three: Confidentiality, Conflict, of Interest, and the Unauthorized Practice of Law
Money Matters
Overzealous Representation
Enforcement
Tort Law of Negligence

Chapter 11

Homework: Read Chapter 11 and Handouts
Chapter 11 Current Event & Presentation
Read Your Assigned Chapter from Chapters 6-9 or 12-17 and Work on Powerpoint
Presentation

Week 9 **Legal Ethics** **Chapter 11**
Ethics Rules
The Big Three: Confidentiality, Conflict, of Interest, and the Unauthorized Practice of Law
Money Matters
Overzealous Representation
Enforcement
Tort Law of Negligence

Homework: Read Chapter 11 and Handouts
Read Your Assigned Chapter from Chapters 6-9 or 12-17 and Work on Powerpoint Presentation

Week 10 **Ethics Current Event Presentations** **Chapter 11**

Homework: Read Chapter 10
Legal Writing: Case Briefing
Read Your Assigned Chapter from Chapters 6-9 or 12-17 and Work on Powerpoint Presentation

Week 11 **Applying the Law** **Chapter 10**
Predicting the Outcome in Your Client's Case
A Note on Logic
The Format on a Written Analysis
Internal Office Memorandum

Homework: Read Chapter 10
Legal Writing: Case Briefing
Read Your Assigned Chapter from Chapters 6-9 or 12-17 and Work on Powerpoint Presentation

Week 12 **Applying the Law** **Chapter 10**
Predicting the Outcome in Your Client's Case
A Note on Logic
The Format on a Written Analysis
Internal Office Memorandum

Homework: Read Chapter 10
Legal Writing: Case Briefing
Read Your Assigned Chapter from Chapters 6-9 or 12-17 and Work on Powerpoint Presentation

Week 13 **Applying the Law** **Chapter 10**
Predicting the Outcome in Your Client's Case
A Note on Logic
The Format on a Written Analysis
Internal Office Memorandum

Homework: Legal Writing: Office Memorandum
Read Your Assigned Chapter from Chapters 6-9 or 12-17 and Work on Powerpoint Presentation

Week 14 **Applying the Law**
Predicting the Outcome in Your Client's Case
A Note on Logic
The Format on a Written Analysis
Internal Office Memorandum

Chapter 10

Homework: Legal Writing: Office Memorandum
Read Your Assigned Chapter from Chapters 6-9 or 12-17 and Work on Powerpoint Presentation

Week 15 **POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS**
Torts
Contract Law
Property & Estate Law
Laws Affecting Business
Family Law
Criminal Law and Procedure

Chapters 6-9 or 12-17

Finals: Final Assignments

THIS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. ALL CHANGES WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS.

FIVE (5) CHAPTER OUTLINE ASSIGNMENTS – EACH IS WORTH 50 POINTS (250 POINTS)

One of the best pieces of advice that I give my students is to outline their textbook readings for classes. The two primary reasons why I encourage this is because developing the outlines will help students in their understanding and retention of material in the text chapters and creating an outline will also provide a study guide for course exams. ***Outlines will be graded on the basis of accuracy, punctuation and form.***

HOW TO OUTLINE A CHAPTER IN OUR TEXTBOOK

1. Don't try and read a chapter in a short period of time. In order to retain information from textbooks, students are better served by reading a chapter over the course of several reading periods. To cram the reading of a chapter into one sitting, it will be difficult to understand and retain text let alone develop an outline.
2. Use chapter and section headings in the course text as headings for the outline. It helps to turn section headings into questions and then use the related text to answer the question. For example, a textbook section titled "Articles of Confederation" could be altered to an outline heading such as "What were the Articles of Confederation." After each heading, summarize the chapter text relevant to the answering of that question.
3. Start with the chapter title and chapter number at the top of the page.
4. Read anything in bold, underlined or in italics. Write that information down. Vocabulary words are incredibly important. Don't just write the definition down that you see in the back of the book or on the side, read the one in the text and get a fuller picture of how the word is used and the context.

EXAMPLE

- I. Chapters Are Divided into Sections
 - A. Sections each have specific information
 - B. Indenting the descriptions of each section makes it easier to read
 1. When you don't indent it is harder to find the information
 2. When you don't indent it is harder to study from your outline
 - C. Outlines should have enough information to help on a test.